



CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

FEBRUARY 26 2011

Scripture Story: Genesis 19:1-14.

Commentary: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapter 14.

no laughing matter



Photo by Colleen Cahill

flashlight

"The Redeemer of the world declares that there are greater sins than that for which Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Those who hear the gospel invitation calling sinners to repentance, and heed it not, are more guilty before God than were the dwellers in the vale of Siddim. And still greater sin is theirs who profess to know God and to keep His commandments, yet who deny Christ in their character and their daily life" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 165).

keytext

"So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. He said, 'Hurry and get out of this place, because the Lord is about to destroy the city!' But his sons-in-law thought he was joking."

(Genesis 19:14, NIV)

what do you think?

If a catastrophe was going to happen in your town, rank the following warnings from which you would want given first priority to which you would want given last priority (1-highest; 5-lowest).

- ___ I want my mother and father to be warned.
- ___ I want my friends to be warned.
- ___ I want my pets to be warned.
- ___ I want someone to warn me.
- ___ I want my city to be warned.

did you know?

The names Sodom and Gomorrah were not the original names of the cities God destroyed in Genesis 19. Unfortunately, the real names of Sodom and Gomorrah were not preserved. Sodom was derived from the Hebrew word *S'dom*, which means "burnt." Gomorrah was derived from the Hebrew word *Amorah*, which means "a ruined heap." These appear to be place names that were assigned after the disaster and were not their original names.

INTO THE STORY

"The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. 'My lords,' he said, 'please turn aside to your servant's house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning.'

"No," they answered, 'we will spend the night in the square.'

"But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house. They called to Lot, 'Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.'

"Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door

behind him and said, 'No, my friends.

Don't do this wicked thing. Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don't do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.'

"Get out of our way,' they replied. And they said, 'This fellow came here as an alien, and now he wants to play the judge! We'll treat you worse than them.' They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door.

"But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

"The two men said to Lot, 'Do you have anyone else here . . . who belongs to you? Get them out of here, because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the Lord against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it.'

"So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, . . . 'Hurry and get out of this place, because the Lord is about to destroy the city!' But his sons-in-law thought he was joking."

(Genesis 19:1-14, NIV)



OUT OF THE STORY

Who are the main actors in this story?

What parts of the story are key to understanding it? (*Underline* them.)

What aspects of the story are new to you? (Place an *arrow* beside them.)

Lot hesitates before obeying the angels' command to leave Sodom. Is this true obedience? Explain.

What emotions, actions, or adjectives enrich this story? (Draw a *rectangle* around them.)

Why do you think it is that Lot's sons-in-law didn't believe him?

If it is never wise to live close to people who are committing sin, what should Lot have done?

punch lines

"Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it" (**Hebrews 13:2, NIV**).

"The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord your God" (**Leviticus 19:34, NIV**).

"How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you" (**Psalms 31:19, NIV**).

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will" (**Romans 12:2, NIV**).

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God" (**Colossians 3:1, NIV**).

"As the Lord commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua did it; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses" (**Joshua 11:15, NIV**).

other eyes

"One act of obedience is better than one thousand sermons."—Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 20th-century

German Lutheran pastor and theologian.

"The first step in a person's salvation is knowing their sin."—Seneca, 1st-century

A.D. Roman philosopher.

Sabbath

In the *What Do You Think?* section this week you had the difficult task of choosing whom you would warn if a disaster was about to happen and you had to choose the order in which the warnings would be given.

God takes His warnings very seriously, as we'll find out this week. Read the following scriptures: 2 Chronicles 19:10; Ezekiel 3:18; Ezekiel 33:9.

In each of these scriptures God gives specific consequences for failing to carry out His warnings. List those consequences below:

Sunday

Read the *Into the Story* passage. Few stories in the Bible are quite as scary as this one. There are several turning points in this Bible episode. List some of them below:

1. Two mysterious strangers show up in town.
2. Lot invites them to stay at his house and insists that they do.

3.

4.

5.

When the two strangers indicate that God's destruction is soon to fall on Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot senses the urgency of the moment. Does anyone else in his household "get" it? List two possible reasons why Lot's wife, children, and other relatives did not feel this sense of urgency to leave Sodom.

1.

2.

Are you ready to leave all behind to be saved by God?

Monday

Read this week's *Key Text* again. This scripture expresses the sad reality of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah at the time

that God destroyed them. How did Lot's sons-in-law respond to his warnings about Sodom's destruction? Which of the following best describes their attitude at the time.

1. "I don't care."
2. "Nothing is going to happen here."
3. "Come back tomorrow."
4. "You sound so funny with all your God talk, Old Man."

Read Acts 26:25-29. The apostle Paul would shortly be sentenced to death, but before he was, he preached an awesome sermon. What was King Agrippa's response to Paul's appeals?

How do you respond to God's appeals to you?

Tuesday

What were some of the sins committed by the people of Sodom and Gomorrah? Several sexual sins come to mind, but they were also guilty of idolatry, witchcraft, and other evil behaviors.

Ellen White notes that there is a sin greater than these. Read the *Flashlight* quote.

Why is this sin considered greater than even those of Sodom and Gomorrah?

Wednesday

One of the few bright spots in the story of Lot, Sodom, and Gomorrah is the theme of hospitality. Do you think Lot knew who his two mysterious guests were when he first invited them to his home? Is it wise today to invite total strangers to your home?

In many cultures, the form of hospitality showed by Lot is expected of all the people. Read the *Punch Lines* for this week and answer the following: How are we supposed to treat strangers we meet? Who might these strangers be?

Can you remember anyone you met or helped

who seemed to be an angel sent from God to you? What did Jesus say about helping others in Matthew 25:40?

Thursday

One of the powerful themes in the story of Sodom is sexual immorality. The men of the city came to Lot's house to have sex with his guests.

Does God love people who commit sexual sins? Read the story found in 2 Samuel 11:1-5, 26, 27. God loves sinners, but He cannot accept our sins.

What two things can you do this week to stay sexually pure?

1.

2.

Friday

Is there anything in your life separating you from God? In Lot's family, the sights and sounds of Sodom were too much to give up for God. The angels had to literally drag Lot, his wife, and his daughters from Sodom.

What is preventing you from seeing God?

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this week's reading*

Patriarchs and Prophets, chapter 14.

*A special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets* has been created just for you by the White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: www.cornerstoneconnections.net. By following this plan you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.